

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 01009

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: CH, UR, JA, EFIS
SUBJECT: SOVIETS SHOW SATISFACTION OVER JAPANESE VISIT

REF: MOSCOW 0614

SUMMARY: EMBOFF SPOKE JAN. 19 WITH ALEKSANDR S. CHASOVNIKOV OF THE
MFA'S SECOND FAR EASTERN DEPARTMENT ON THE RECENT VISIT OF JAPANESE
FOREIGN MINISTER SONODA. CHASOVNIKOV SAID THAT THE VISIT WAS "POSITIV
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AND GAVE A GENERALLY FAVORABLE TONE TO HIS REVIEW OF SOVIET-JAPANESE
RELATIONS. A SIMILAR ASSESSMENT IS PROVIDED BY THE LATEST ISSUE OF
THE SOVIET JOURNAL NOVOYE VREMYA. END SUMMARY.

1. ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE RECENT SONODA VISIT, CHASOVNIKOV GAVE IT A
"POSITIVE" ASSESSMENT. HE SAID THAT BOTH SIDES HAD ADHERED TO THEIR
RESPECTIVE POSITIONS ON THE TERRITORIAL ISSUE WITH THE SOVIETS TELL-
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ING THE JAPANESE THAT THEY WOULD NOT CONSIDER RETURNING ANY OF THEIR
TERRITORY TO JAPAN. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION REGARDING CURRENT SOVIET
POSITION ON KHRUSHCHEV'S OFFER TO SETTLE ISSUE ON BASIS OF RETURNING
HABOMAI AND SHIKOTAN TO JAPAN, CHASOVNIKOV REPEATED HIS STATEMENT
THAT THE USSR WILL GIVE UP NO TERRITORY. HE SAID THAT SINCE THIS
ISSUE HAD BLOCKED THE CONCLUSION OF A PEACE TREATY, THE SOVIET SIDE
PROPOSED THE CONCLUSION OF COOPERATION AND GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS

TREATY.

2. CHASOVNIKOV STATED THAT SOVIET-JAPANESE ECONOMIC RELATIONS ARE PROGRESSING FAVORABLY, CITING YAKUTIA COAL, TIMBER RESOURCES, AND OIL EXPLORATION OFF SAKHALIN AS AREAS OF COOPERATION. HE SAID THAT NATURAL GAS PROJECT IN YAKUTIA CONTINUES TO BE HELD UP BECAUSE OF THE U.S. TRADE LEGISLATION. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE USSR STILL HOPES TO CON

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CLUDE A LONG-TERM ECONOMIC AGREEMENT WITH JAPAN, AND THAT IN PLACE OF THIS AGREEMENT SONODA HAD PROPOSED ESTABLISHING A JOINT ECONOMIC COMMISSION (REFTEL).

3. ASKED ABOUT JAPANESE-CHINESE RELATIONS, CHASOVNIKOV SAID THAT THE JAPANESE HAD SAID THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. THE SOVIETS HAD RESPONDED BY STATING THAT THEY HOPED THAT THESE RELATIONS WOULD NOT BE AT THE EXPENSE OF THIRD COUNTRIES. WHEN PRESSED ON THE ANTI-HEGEMONY CLAUSE AND ASKED WHY THE SOVIET UNION OBJECTED SO STRONGLY TO THE INCORPORATION IN A SINO-JAPANESE TREATY OF LANGUAGE SIMILAR TO THAT IN THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE, CHASOVNIKOV SAID THAT THERE IS A GREAT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO CASES. THE U.S. IS FAR AWAY AND HAS GLOBAL INTERESTS, HE SAID, WHEREAS JAPAN IS CLOSE TO THE SOVIET UNION AND THE LANGUAGE IN A SINO-JAPANESE TREATY COULD ONLY BE INTERPRETED AS ANTI-SOVIET.

4. ON OTHER MATTERS, CHASOVNIKOV SAID THAT DURING THE SONODA TALKS
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JAPANESE HAD ASKED THE SOVIETS TO USE THEIR INFLUENCE TO EASE THE KOREAN SITUATION. THE SOVIET SIDE REPLIED THAT THE ISSUE WOULD BE SOLVED BY THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL U.S. TROOPS AND A SETTLEMENT ACHIEVED BETWEEN THE TWO KOREAS. ON SOVIET-JAPANESE FISHERIES NEGOTIATIONS, CHASOVNIKOV SAID THAT THE 1977 PROVISIONAL AGREEMENT HAD BEEN EXTENDED FOR A YEAR ON THE BASIS OF A JAPANESE CATCH OF 850,000 TONS IN THE SOVIET 200-MILE ZONE AND A SOVIET CATCH OF 65,000 TONS IN THE JAPANESE ZONE. NEGOTIATIONS WILL BEGIN IN FEBRUARY ON AN AGREEMENT COVERING FISHING BEYOND THE 200-MILE ZONES.

5. SOVIET SATISFACTION WITH THE SONODA VISIT IS ALSO SUGGESTED BY AND ARTICLE BY G. KRASIN IN THE JAN. 20 ISSUE OF NOVOYE VREMYA. THE ARTICLE GIVES A GENERALLY FAVORABLE ASSESSMENT BOTH OF THE VISIT AND OF SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS, WHICH ARE SAID TO HAVE MADE "SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS" IN THE POSTWAR PERIOD. THE ARTICLE REPEATS AN ARGUMENT PROBABLY MADE TO THE SONODA DELEGATION THAT "TRANSIENT CONSIDERATIONS" SHOULD NOT SET THESE RELATIONS OFF COURSE. KRASIN SPENDS SOME TIME ON THESE "CONSIDERATIONS," DENYING THE VALIDITY OF JAPANESE TERRITORIAL CLAIMS AND WARNING AGAINST THE MACHINATIONS OF PEKING, AND CONCLUDES ON A FAVORABLE NOTE CITING GROMYKO'S REMARKS AT THE LUNCHEON GIVEN

SONODA EXPRESSING CONFIDENCE ABOUT THE FUTURE OF SOVIET-JAPANESE COOPERATION. JAPANESE EMBOFF TELLS US THAT THE TONE OF THIS ARTICLE WAS JUST ABOUT AS HIS EMBASSY HAD EXPECTED, ALTHOUGH SOME HAD FEARED THAT THE ARTICLE WOULD BE HARSHER TOWARD JAPAN.

6. COMMENT: WHILE BOTH SIDES PROFESS SATISFACTION WITH THE VISIT, IT MAY BE MORE CORRECT TO SAY THAT NEITHER SIDE WAS SURPRISED BY THE OUTCOME AND THE LACK OF A COMMUNIQUE. THE NEXT MOVE IS UP TO TOKYO IN DECIDING WHETHER TO MOVE FORWARD WITH ITS TREATY WITH CHINA AND THE SOVIETS CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO EXERT WHAT PRES-SURE THEY CAN TO BLOCK THE CONCLUSION OF THIS TREATY. ONE CARD MOSCOW IS CLEARLY NOT PREPARED TO PLAY IN THIS GAME, HOWEVER, IS THAT OF HOLDING OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF CONCESSIONS IN THE NORTHER TERRITORIES.
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